

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS
TAGS: PFOR EG IS UR ENRG
SUBJECT: SADAT INTERVIEW WITH READERS DIGEST SENIOR
STAFFERS

1. READERS DIGEST (RD) SENIOR STAFFERS ROBERT DIVINE
AND JOHN PANITZA, WHO HAVE BEEN IN CAIRO PAST FEW DAYS PRE-
PARING STORY ON EGYPT, HAD INTERVIEW WITH PRESIDENT SADAT
LAST EVENING AND CAME BY AFTERWARDS TO BRIEF ME. PRINCIPAL
POINTS MADE BY SADAT FOLLOW:

A. DISENGAGEMENT IS PROCEEDING SATISFACTORILY.
ISRAELIS, WHO HAD PREVIOUSLY BEEN UNWILLING ACCEPT HIS
REPEATED PEACE OFFERS, HAD BECOME MORE FLEXIBLE AS A RESULT
OF ARAB SUCCESSES DURING OCTOBER HOSTILITIES. CREDIT
FOR ACHIEVING DISENGAGEMENT AGREEMENT GOES TO PRESIDENT
NIXON AND SECRETARY KISSINGER. HOWEVER, EGYPTIAN
DISENGAGEMENT IS ONLY FIRST STEP ON ROAD TO PEACE.
SIMILAR DISENGAGEMENT MUST ALSO TAKE PLACE SHORTLY ON
SYRIAN FRONT AND ULTIMATELY ISRAELIS MUST LEAVE OCCUPIED
ARAB TERRITORIES.

B. SINAI: WHEN ASKED BY PANITZA IF A PART OF SINAI
MIGHT BE DETACHED AND JOINED WITH GAZA AREA, SADAT BRISTLED.
HE FORCEFULLY REPEATED SEVERAL TIMES, "ISRAEL MUST LEAVE
ALL OF MY TERRITORY." RD STAFFERS WERE STRUCK BY SADAT'S
TERMINOLOGY SEEMINGLY REFERRING ONLY TO EGYPTIAN
TERRITORY.

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C. RELATIONS WITH SOVIETS: SADAT DECLINED TO DISCUSS EGYPTIAN RELATIONS WITH SOVIETS. APPARENTLY RECOGNIZING THE RD EDITORS HAD ALREADY DISCUSSED SUBJECT WITH OTHERS, SADAT MADE A SPECIAL PLEA EVEN AFTER THE TAPE RECORDER WAS TURNED OFF TO ASK THAT NOTHING BE PUBLISHED ON THIS SCORE. HE CLAIMED IT WOULD SERIOUSLY EMBARRASS HIM AT THIS TIME.

D. OIL EMBARGO: SADAT STATED CATEGORICALLY OIL EMBARGO WILL BE LIFTED ON MARCH 17, BUT GAVE NO DETAILS.

3. RETIREMENT: WHEN ASKED ABOUT POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR, SADAT STATED CATEGORICALLY HE INTENDS LEAVE OFFICE IN OCTOBER 1976, BUT WOULD NOT GO BEYOND THIS. BOTH MADAME SADAT AND AHRAM EDITOR ALI AMIN, WERE PRESENT FOR INTERVIEW, REMONSTRATED WITH THE PRESIDENT NOT RPT NOT TO SET ANY SUCH PUBLIC DATE. SADAT REPORTEDLY REMAINED ADAMANT, INSISTING HE IS DETERMINED RETIRE IN OCTOBER, 1976.

F. ARABIC EDITION OF READERS DIGEST: SADAT MADE STRONG PLEA THAT RD RESUME PUBLISHING AL-MUKHTAR, ITS ERSTWHILE ARABIC EDITION. HE PROPOSED RD BRING ITS OWN PRINTING PLANT INTO EGYPT AND OFFERED ALL ASSISTANCE TO FACILITATE PRINTING AND DISTRIBUTION. RD STAFFERS SAID THEY WILL CONSIDER MATTER.

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